

church): "When Mr. Wesley baptized adults professing faith in Christ, he chose to do it by trine immersion if the person would submit to it, judging this to be the apostolic method." *Morre's life of Wesley* Vol. I p. 425.

John Calvin (founder of Presbyterian church.) "The very word signifies to immerse and it is certain that immersion was observed by the ancient church." *Inst.* Vol. 4 15: 19.

Judson (Baptist.) "In apostolic times the administrator placed his hand on the head of the candidate who then bowed forward until the head was submerged and rose by his own effort." *On baptism* p. 112. (The first case of backward single immersion was that of Thos. Muntzer March 1, 1522.)

Bishop Beveredge Vol. 8 p. 336. "The practice of trine immersion prevailed in the west as well as in the east till the fourth council of Toledo, which acting under the advice of Gregory the Great in order to settle some disputes which had arisen, decreed that henceforth only one immersion should be used in baptism and from that time the practice gradually became general thruout the western or Latin church."

Darras (Catholic.) "Baptism was usually administered by immersion. The subject was three times plunged in the water and each time the minister named one of the divine persons of the Trinity, but baptism by aspersion was allowed in cases of necessity. * * The newly baptized were presented to the bishop and by the imposition of hands received the Holy Ghost or sacrament of confirmation." *History of Church* Vol. I. P. 77.

Schaff. "The Didache, the catacomb pictures, and the teaching of the Fathers, Greek and Latin, are in essential harmony on this point and thus confirm one another. They all bear witness to trine immersion as the rule and affusion or pouring as the exception. This view is supported by the best scholars, Greek, Latin and Protestant."

The Jesuit P. Raffaele Garrucci who wrote the most elaborate and magnificent work on ancient Christian art says that the most ancient and solemn rite was "to immerse the person in the water and three times also the head, while the minister pronounced the three names."

Dean Stanley (Ch. of England.) "There can be no question that the original form of baptism, the very meaning of the word, was complete immersion in the deep baptismal waters, and that for at least four centuries any other form was at least unknown or disregarded, unless in the case of dangerous illness, as an exceptional, almost a monstrous case. To this form the eastern church still vigorously adheres and the most illustrious portions of it, that of the Byzantine Empire absolutely repudiates any other mode of administration as essentially invalid. The Latin church has wholly altered the mode and with the two exceptions of the cathedral of Milan and the sect of the Baptists, a few

drops of water are now the western substitute for the three-fold plunge into the rushing rivers or the wide baptistries of the east." *History of eastern church* p. 117.

Space utterly fails to give the scores of just such testimonies as these which are available. Let me add just one more because of its special frankness.

Rev. L. L. Paine D. D., Professor of church History in the Congregational Seminary at Bangor, Maine, says in an article in *The Christian Mirror* Aug. 3, 1875, referring to the fact that immersion (which we have seen was the tri-une form) was the apostolic form of baptism, "The testimony is ample and decisive. No matter of church history is clearer. The evidence is all one way and all church historians of any repute agree in accepting it. We cannot claim even originality in teaching it in a Congregational Seminary, and we really feel guilty of a kind of anachronism in writing an article to insist upon it. It is a point on which ancient, mediaeval and modern historians alike, Catholic and Protestant, Lutheran and Calvinist, have no controversy.

And the simple reason for this unanimity is that the statements of the early Fathers are so clear, and the light shed upon these statements from the early customs of the church is so conclusive that no historian who cares for his reputation would dare to deny it and no historian who is worthy of the name would wish to."

VII. The Eastern Church Has Practiced Triune Immersion from the Days of the Apostles to the Present.

The Greeks ought to know their own language best and this church numbering more than seventy millions has steadfastly adhered to the original mode of baptism. The fact that the church has some unwarranted practices does not alter the fact that no one can point to a date this side of the apostles when this church began to practice triune immersion.

The church of Philadelphia in Asia Minor is mentioned in Rev. 3: 10 exists to this day saved, as Gibbon says, "by prophecy or courage," and preserves triune immersion as a standing monument of the apostolic practice.

In general too, those churches which now practice sprinkling or pouring still retain the trine action.

VIII. The Baptistries of the Early Church are Standing Proof of Immersion while both the size of the Font and the Pictures on the Walls Indicate the Forward Action.

These are simply some of the evidences for triune immersion. Many more might be given for immersion in general.

We have seen that triune immersion is necessitated by a literal construction of the commission and also by its symbolism.

It is supported by the other New Testament scriptures and by the writings of the early fathers.

It is supported by the proof of the origin

of single immersion over three hundred years after Christ.

It is supported by the authority of scores of the leading historians and by the entire body of the eastern church.

The vast majority who have ever come into the church have been baptized by this mode. It is the only mode which completely represents the teaching of baptism. It is no wonder that it is the only mode which every church regards as valid. It is accepted everywhere. Why should it not be again universally practiced and thus become a bond of union among all Christians. The Brethren have a mission in encouraging Christian unity on the basis of loyalty to truth. Could our form of baptism be disproved we would be obliged, according to our principles, to give it up. But investigation only confirms it and we may earnestly preach it.

But let us remember always that the form is the bottle and the vital thing is the wine of the gospel,—lest we lose the spirit in zeal for the letter.

And let us remember too, the confusing mass of teaching on this subject, lest we unchristianize those who conscientiously hold to different views.

With love for all God's people and supreme love for Jesus Christ, let us show that obedience which is the true expression of love.

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HOME MISSIONS

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My subject relates to the work of our local mission boards.

It is presumed that each district conference has a mission board and has entrusted to it certain work.

In a measure the same difficulties confront all boards, tho the work is easier in some districts than others. I think how to attain the best results and the best methods is at present an unsolved problem. In this as in all other work we learn to do by doing. And the work is of great moment in that the mission spirit is the life of the church, and is the mark of her usefulness to the state.

The ideal mission work needs no boards to finance it, or the ideal workers a promise of dollars and cents. But this is a mercenary age even in religious matters.

Let us look at the subject under the following heads.

I. THE FIELD

We may say the field is unlimited. There are a number of States in which we have no congregations, and in the States where we are found there are counties which know us not as a church,—tho men and women who live in sin abound in countless numbers. So for our work the field is far greater than we as a people are able to occupy should every member of our church give his whole attention to preaching Christ to those in need